Internal Form for Oral History File

This file contains the oral history of: Richard P. Garcia

Recorded on: November 12, 2025

Recorded by: Julissa Gomez Ruvalcaba

Recorded in (location): California State Railroad Museum, Big 4 Conference Room

For the Purpose of: Recording the history of families who worked in the Southern Pacific Railroad company and exploring the lives of their children.

Oral History Description

Narrator's Age: XX

Narrator City/State: Sacramento, California

Brief Summary: In this interview, Richard P. Garica, son of a former Southern Pacific Railroad foreman, recalls his time living in the foreman homes with his family describing the homes and surrounding areas in detail; what he did to pass the time as a child at the railroad yards; his time spent with his father and the fellow railroad men; when he accompanied his father to work; what items his family grew and cooked when living in the box cars and foreman houses; explaining his mother's cooking, house projects, and community involvement; how isolated the foreman house was and why; his walking school commute when they moved to the suburbs; the family dynamic, his time in high school; his relationship with his brother and sister; his time visiting Chicago with his children to see a football game; his decision to go to a specific high school; the lottery system during the Vietnam War; his mother learning to drive late in life; his parent's relationship; family stories related to aunts, uncles, and cousins; how his parents disciplined them; his father taking him to see a wrestling match when he was young.

Subject:

Holding Institution:

Accession Number:

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File garcia_richard_01_1242025_ER_mic1summary: In this interview, Richard P. Garcia of a former Southern Pacific Railroad foreman, recalls his time living in the foreman homes with his family describing the homes and surrounding areas in detail; what he did to pass the time as a child at the railroad yards; his time spent with his father and the fellow railroad men; when he accompanied his father to work; what items his family grew and cooked when living in the box cars and foreman houses; explaining his mother's cooking, house projects, and community involvement; how isolated the foreman house was and why; his walking school commute when they moved to the suburbs; the family dynamic, his time in high school; his relationship with his brother and sister; his time visiting Chicago with his children to see a football game; his decision to go to a specific high school; the lottery system during the Vietnam War; his mother learning to drive late in life; his parent's relationship; family stories related to aunts, uncles, and cousins; how his parents disciplined them; his father taking him to see a wrestling match when he was young.

Interview with: Richard P. Garcia
Interviewed by: Julissa Gomez Ruvalcaba
Transcriber: Julissa Gomez Ruvalcaba
[Interview #01: November 12, 2025]
[Begin Audio File: garcia_richard_01_1242025_ER_mic1]

[00:00:00] **Richard:** Don't make me laugh either. [statement directed toward Mary who is sitting aside from Richard on the other side of the table]

[00:00:05] **Interviewer:** It's okay if you laugh, it's fine.

[00:00:07] **Interviewer:** So we're gonna do the opening transcript. First thank you so much for being here. I'm like really excited to have this conversation.

[00:00:13] **Interviewer:** So this is Julissa Gomez Ruvalcaba, the 2025-2026 Oral History Fellow for the California State Railroad Museum interviewing Richard Garcia. Today is Wednesday, November 12th and is currently 11:34. This oral history is being conducted in the Big Four Con, Conference room that we're in right now in the California State Railroad Museum. And before we begin this recording, Richard, Do I have your permission to record this oral history and the permission of State Parks to publish this transcript in part or its entirety? And you can say yes or no.

[00:00:50] **Richard:** Yes, you do.

[00:00:51] **Interviewer:** Awesome. Um, yeah. So we can just get started. I'm gonna be looking at my notes as we're speaking. These are questions. I, I think I, I sent you some as well as I told you some questions we'll be asking, but we're gonna go first more into introductory questions just to kind of get to know who you are. So, can you state your name for me?

[00:01:14] **Richard:** My name's Richard P. Garcia.

[00:01:16] **Interviewer:** What does the P stand for? If you don't mind.

[00:01:20] **Richard:** P stands for Preberto

[00:01:23] **Interviewer:** Oh —

[00:01:23] **Richard:** — And I'm named after Our Lady of Perpetual Health.

[00:01:29] **Interviewer:** I love that. Can you tell me when and where you were born?

[00:01:32] **Richard:** I was born in Chico, California in 1952, January 15th.

[00:01:38] **Interviewer:** And can you tell me who your parents are?

[00:01:56] **Richard:** [long pause before responding] Mom, Lucy J. Garcia and Jesus Jiminez Garcia or Jesus Abram Garcia. [voice wavers and tears up]

[00:02:10] **Interviewer:** Do you wanna take a pause?

[00:02:11] **Richard:** Yeah.

[00:02:12] **Interviewer:** You wanna take a pause.

[00:02:13] **Richard:** I'll need a Kleenex too.

[00:02:15] **Interviewer:** That's okay.

{Took a short break before continuing with oral history recording}

[00:02:18] **Interviewer:** My next question is how many siblings do you have?

[00:02:22] **Richard:** I have an older brother named Jesse. I have an older sister named Mary.

[00:02:26] **Interviewer:** And what's the age difference between your siblings and you?

[00:02:31] **Richard:** Uum, my brother I believe is seven years. My sister is five, four—

[00:02:36] **Interviewer:** Four years older —

[00:02:37] **Richard:** — Four years.

[00:02:40] **Interviewer:** What I'm going to do is I want to ask you about boxcar living. [looks down toward notes and flips the page] So, I know we spoke a bit prior about how your family would move from boxcar to then the foreman house. And also you, you are the youngest, your memories might change a little bit, But can you tell me what is the earliest memory that you have of living in the box cars or in homes that were near the railroad? Either or.

[00:03:14] **Richard:** My first recollection of living in one of the homes was in Oroville, California. We lived in the foreman's home and that was on the property of the Sacramento Northern. And it was in, in or near the construction yard there. It was an older style home where it had high ceilings 12 foot or whatever. [hand hits table as he speaks] And for me, living out in the country was a nice time and stuff because of the fact that I could do just about anything I want as long as I was within yelling distance of my mom for me to come home.

[00:03:56] **Richard:** So I mean, and then one of the nice things was the fact that my brother made me a slingshot so. Being at the railroad, there was always rocks go, go ahead and use and stuff. And there was certain areas I could not go to. I couldn't go into the construction area. I couldn't go down to— it was more like a pond, but to me it seemed like a lake because it was so big there.

[00:04:29] **Richard:** Lived there. My brother and I shared a room and I don't recall if my sister was in the same room. We had bunk beds that slept in and the railroad tracks themselves were, that I recall approximately, maybe 20 feet out in front of the, front of the house off the porch. And they would come by and the engineer would wave, and the other gentleman that worked on the train would wave and stuff. Everybody was real friendly. Unfortunately, sometimes they would come by in the middle of the night which would wake you up and because of the train being on the tracks so close to the house it would shake the house a lot and would wake you up. But, after a while you learned to ignore it and you knew what it was. One time, my cousin he's younger by two years approximately, I guess. David was spending time with us and he was sleeping and a train came by in the middle of the night and it shook the house, shook the bed. He thought it was an earthquake because it made so much noise and moved. Moved everything. Vibrated everything. And he was yelling and screaming that *it was an earthquake*. And my mom came in, everybody woke up and calmed him down and said, "*No, look out the window. It's the train*." And he couldn't believe that the train could move the house and everything so much.

[00:05:58] **Richard:** There was a man that was my dad's foreman and I don't recall his name. But anyway, he had a son that was. I don't know what they call them now, but he was— had the mindset of like a 10-year-old boy. And the dad would bring him over and he was my friend and played, and he was instructed not to let anything happen to me. [chokes up when speaking] So that was the only playmate that I had because we were living out in the country and it was a lot of fun for us. And he'd go ahead and I'd, [laughs] I'd talk, try to talk him into going here or there. Go down by the, go down by the pond. He'd say "*No."* And I'd say, "*Yeah, come on*." I'd start going. And because he was, he was a man in a boy's body, he would literally pick me up and carry me back. He said, "*Your mom said no, we're not going*." So that was the end of that. But, he visited quite often which was fun for me because I had actually somebody to talk to and play with.

[00:07:19] **Richard:** Also the other things that I had, I had chores, and one of the chores was to feed the chickens. The other chore was to feed the rabbits. And my mom always told me, "*Don't you know, don't name them. Don't, you know, don't get real friendly with them*." When I'd go in and they were be in the cage and I'd pet them, and every once in a while the chicken would show up missing. Or a rabbit. She says, "*Oh*," she says "*It must have got out*." And finally one day I saw her out there with a chicken, with an axe cutting the head off of a chicken. [laughs] So I knew what was going on. I surmised that that was probably the same thing that happened to the rabbit.

[00:08:07] **Richard:** And my mom was an excellent cook. And to me, the rabbit tastes like chicken and it's one thing I have to say is I never went hungry [chokes up when speaking toward the end].

[00:08:22] **Richard:** And then, that's about it for the Oroville house.

[00:08:27] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[00:08:29] **Richard:** The other house that I remember we were at was the Chico house, and that was the most fun. I was older and behind the house was where they made pipes out of cement. And these pipes were made per irrigation or sewer that were placed down into the city streets. And there was a man there, a big heavyset man, a watchman. He'd walk around in patrol and when my cousins come over. My cousin David, we would sneak over there and play in the pipes where we weren't supposed to be and we would have him chase us and he would try and chase us and catch us because we were faster than him and we were smaller. We were able to run through the pipes and he goes, "*You guys are gonna get hurt. You guys are gonna get crushed by the pipes*." Fortunately, we never did. And to this, it wasn't until my later years in life that I couldn't figure out how my mom figured out that we were over there. There was this type of bush that separated the railroad property from that pipe property and when you broke a branch it had an oil in it that had a certain smell or scent to it. And so, when we were going through there at different areas where the fence was broken or cut. And if you broke one of them branches that rubbed on your skin or rubbed on your pants. And when we got back, my mom knew that we were over there and for the longest time, couldn't figure out until one day she told me, "*'Cause you could tell because of the, the scent off that branch that rubbed against your skin and stuff*."

[00:10:26] **Richard:** The other thing I remember about that house 'cause again, it was the foreman's house. In Chico it sat, I don't know, half block off the main road and then it was off a side road and across the way there was a bowling alley? [looks toward Mary] I believe.

[00:10:51] **Richard:** Anyway, and the other thing that I remember was that it was a big piece of property vacant property and every once in a while, the circus would come to town. And they would have their animals out there, and then they would parade, you know, some of the animals through the city streets, like the elephants, the camels, some other animals. And we'd be able to go out there and watch them walk by which was thoroughly an exciting and stuff. And then my parents on occasion would take me to the circus. The other thing I remember about the house was that again, it had high ceilings and it had, which now everybody would love to have, was an oak roll-up desk where my dad kept his paperwork at and it was rather, rather large. I mean, it was so big that I could go ahead and get in the desk and close the close the rolling door on it to close it out and stuff. And I would hide in there every once in a while from my brother. But yeah, it was, I mean, I enjoyed myself there. And I, and when family came. And then my godmother also lived in Chico, so we would go visit her and occasionally I would stay with her. And as a child couldn't ask for anything better. [chokes up]

[00:12:38] **Richard:** Chico house I remember the most, 'cause I was older then. And—

[00:12:43] **Interviewer:** — How old were you?

[00:12:45] **Richard:** I'm gonna ask estimate maybe four? And at the Oroville house I was maybe three where I, you know, remember things. But, as I said. And then on occasion my dad would take me with him to the construction area and during the summertime once in a great while, he would take me with him if they were working just outside of

town to his work sites. And I would watch the men, and the men would go ahead and take care of me and stuff. They wouldn't let me do things and stuff. They were always watching so I wouldn't get hurt and they'd be always telling me, "*No, you can't do this. No, you can't go there*." And there was one man who I liked 'cause he was really friendly to me. He was always nice and his name, I don't know to this day what his real name was, but his nickname was called Shorty. He was built like a fireplug. He would. His shoulders came to the back of the flatbed truck where they hauled material and he could stand there and he could hoist. Then, they had material, they had the spikes and the plates for the railroad. He could, he could go ahead and put a barrel on each shoulder. He's, he's the strongest man I'd ever seen, but he liked—he would share his food and he'd bring candy every once in a while. But his name was Shorty and like I said, to this day, I don't know what his real name was.

[00:14:35] **Richard:** The other thing I remember most of all being in Chico was that on occasion, a train would come by and pick up the men. And this was before they had refrigerated box cars because Chico and Marysville and Yuba City was known for their nuts and fruits and everything. And so what they would do, the crew would go down to the ice plant and the train with these ice box cars. The men would load 'em up to fill these areas with ice and to go ahead and transport the fruit stuff that was being picked and harvested at the time. And so I would be able to go and I remember all the kids that drove by in their cars and stuff because the engineer for the train— it wasn't moving at the time, would go ahead and allow me to get up into the train and look at the train engine and stuff. And I'd stand there and I'd wave to. People would honk and wave and stuff. All the kids would point and shout, "*Look at that boy up there. He's really lucky. 'cause he's*..." I was standing where the train was at. And then I remember across the street from the ice house, there was a place that. It used to be A&W Frosty where you used to be able to get root beer and such. It closed up and then a small little market opened up in there. And I would beg/borrow for my dad to gimme a quarter because in those days you could get a soda pop, like a Pepsi or RC Cola, and a Snickers bar for a quarter. And that was my big, big treat. And all that. I thought that was the greatest thing in the world. And one of the men would escort me across the road and bring me back. Or if my dad, unfortunately smoked. When he needed a pack of cigarettes, we'd go over there and he'd buy a pack of cigarettes and I would go with him and he would go ahead and let me have either a Pepsi or an RC Cola and a Snickers bar for a quarter. The, uh, like I said I don't, other than that I don't remember too much other than the house.

[00:17:30] **Interviewer:** And then after the house. You said there was like two homes and then there was a box car before you transitioned, before your family lived in the home that you guys bought?

[00:17:40] **Richard:** Yes. That was, to my best recollection, we went from Chico to West Sacramento and that's where we lived in a box car. Box car, the area that is now known as the, or the Sacramento Baseball or where the A's are playing currently. That area used to belong to the railroad and they had a construction yard there and they had several tracks. And an offline track is where we stayed in a boxcar. I don't remember how long we were there, about a year, 18 months.

[00:18:19] **Richard:** And again, there was nobody for me to play with except for, for some reason there was two dogs. One was a yellow lab. One was a black lab that would come up and visit and I would play with them. They were my friends that I played with. And they

always, they always, always were with me when I was out and about. And a lot of times they'd be outside waiting for me to come out and throw sticks or whatever. Have a rag. Play tug of war and things. And they were always, always with me. And sometimes I'd, you know, be able, if I woke up in time to see my dad go off to work. And my sister and brother, they would leave and they would walk down to where the bus would pick them up to go to school. And I think that's where the dogs came from because there was a trailer park there and a small little type grocery store and a gas station combination, there. And like I said, the dogs were always with me and I remember one incident where I was very glad that they were with me. There was, what would you call 'em? Back then they called them hobos and King of the Road. There was a platform where they stored area and he was down underneath there. And I heard him one, I had one of the dogs with me and he was underneath there and he's looking, he goes, "*Hey, what are you doing?*" And he was trying to talk to me and he was trying to convince me to crawl underneath there. I says, "*No."* I said, and I told him, "*You better leave. My dad's the boss here".* He says, (I said) *"If you don't leave, when he gets here, he's gonna call the sheriff and he's gonna make you leave.*" And he goes, "*No, I'm just resting and stuff.*" (The man said) *"You want to visit him?"* And I said, "*No*." So he came out. And he was standing there and I was a little ways away from him. And he started to walk towards me and I, the dog that was with me knew he didn't like that man. And then he, he tried, he said, "*Well, call your dog off. I just want to talk to you."* And I go, "*You better leave*." And then the other dog, which was above where he was hiding underneath, came there. After that, he left. He didn't want anything to do with the dogs. He didn't wait around until my dad got home from work to leave. And I went and told my mom, she goes, "*No, you can't go over there*." everything else. I said, "*I had the dogs with me. They, they're not gonna let anything happen*." And she, after that, she wouldn't let me leave. She had to be within eyesight of me and stuff. Then eventually it wore off so I could go ahead and wander around and stuff. Again, like I said, the dogs were always with me and they were, you know, my friends and my playmates. There were no other kids there at the time and maybe there were some kids at the trailer park, but I wasn't allowed to go down there. It was too far for me to walk and visit.

[00:21:21] **Interviewer:** This is when you, when your family lived in the box car?

[00:21:25] **Richard:** Yes. In West Sacramento there.

[00:21:27] **Interviewer:** And then how old were you during that time when you lived in the boxcar in West Sacramento?

[00:21:33] **Richard:** I wasn't going to school 'cause I was there all the time. So I was, I'm gonna say between four and a half to five because I started school late due to my birthday being in January. So, I started six months after everyone generally starts. But like I said, according to my birthday, I started later. And then one of the things because it was so close to downtown then we would, which was exciting for me because we would. My mom and I would go ahead and walk across the Capitol Bridge and we would go ahead and walk around and go to the Goodwill stores, and she— to look around and stuff and pick the stuff out that she wanted to go ahead and crochet or knit, and we'd come back. And, like I said, there was, I didn't know any different, so it was fine with me. I mean, I had—I always had a good time, you know, and then when my dad came, I would go meet him. And they would be unloading the material from the days working the truck

and he. I was, that's the only time I was allowed and I had to stand by the office door 'cause they were always moving things around. And so I wouldn't get hurt and stuff.

[00:23:07] **Interviewer:** You said that you would accompany your father with him to work?

[00:23:13] **Richard:** On occasion I would. When I got older, after we moved into the house where my parents bought and where I grew up at, just. Which we didn't know at the time. The railroad tracks were like a block away so, he would come in and drive me. And we, he would let us know in the morning. So he would pick me up every once in a while. I was allowed to go with him, to go with him on work. And they would be three other men that were on. I don't know what you'd call 'em, but you have them one, this little putt putt car. That's what I called it, that would ride the rails and stuff. And I'd go in there and I'd sit on his lap. And it was the biggest thrill for me because of the fact that at the time he says, "*You want to drive?*" And I'd go, "*Yeah! I want to drive!*" And I mean, there was no place for it to go, but stay on the tracks. And he goes. "*Can we go faster?"* I'd ask him. He goes, "*Yeah, a little bit faster*." And then we go a little bit faster. A little bit faster and stuff. And I mean, it was, at that time, it was, you know really good. [chokes up] And but like I said, I didn't know any better. And when we were going on then I thought I was driving and stuff and he let me put my hand on the lever and I didn't know what the lever was for. But he says, "*Yeah, you can drive*" and stuff. So that's where I thought, you know, I was driving and there was no place for the thing to go. [laughs]

[00:24:59] **Interviewer:** Do you know how many, was it just you and your father or were there other men on the —

[00:25:02] **Richard:** — No, there was other, there was other men on the putt putt. It would hold four people—four men comfortably. You would seat four. And then on occasion, they would have a trailer and then like, there would be some other men there. But generally that was hauled material. But on occasion, some other of the employees would go ahead and sit in there and he, it'd be moving slow to go ahead and transport them and the material to their workstation. And the tracks were separated because the railroad company that my dad worked for was, alls it did was haul freight and it hauled fruit. I believe Sacramento was the base area and it'd go as far north as Redding. Go into the Fairfield area. Go up. If you go east as far as Auburn for the whatever they grew there and they would go farther south. I believe they would go possibly to Bakersfield because there was a lot of fruit and everything being grown there. But yeah.

[00:26:32] **Richard:** The and that was one of the things, like when they were working and stuff, because they'd be driving through or the tracks would be going through the orchards and stuff. My dad would bring home fresh fruit. Peaches, apples. He, he'd bring some nuts and stuff. But I remember mostly it was peaches. And then he would bring some watermelons, things of that nature that they were going through, working near and stuff.

[00:27:12] **Interviewer:** I heard from when I spoke with Jesse, he told me that your family would can, that your mother would can.

[00:27:18] **Richard:** Oh yeah, my mom canned a lot and she actually. It would be my mom and my grandmother are. My mom and sister would can I guess maybe? [looks

toward Mary. Mary shakes head] She's saying no. [laughs] But, I remember they would can, and they, I mean. They would can a lot, a lot of things. And we had, trying to think of a translation. Nopales.

[00:27:49] **Interviewer:** Um, cactus.

[00:27:50] **Richard:** Cactus.

[00:27:51] **Interviewer:** Uhhuh.

[00:27:52] **Richard:** She grew some of those in the backyard, so she would cut those up and can 'em, and one of the greatest things, my dad, he loved my mom's chili and he loved having the cactus when for breakfast, lunch, or dinner didn't matter. She would bake that up and stuff and cook it up in a pan for him. But yeah, it was, and then as I got older, I learned to like that. First I didn't care for 'em. I didn't, 'cause they were sometimes to me they were stringy and they reminded me of what's that vegetable? That long vegetable. Um, can't think of the name of it, but after a while. I mean now like there's a couple of restaurants that friend and I go to, well actually he's my daughter's father-in-law that we go to and we ask for a side of nopales to go ahead and put on our, our breakfast. This, all that makes it all that much more flavorful and enjoyable to go ahead and eat.

[00:29:07] **Interviewer:** Yeah, I, I love nopales actually. My parents, they also grow some in their backyard and so they also cut 'em. And then I like putting nopales en la colma.

[00:29:17] **Richard:** Mm-hmm.

[00:29:18] **Interviewer:** And then you, then, you know, you cook it and then you put some chile and then you, and then you have it with like some fri, fri, frijoles, and then con tortillas and that's it.

[00:29:27] **Richard:** Yeah.

[00:29:27] **Interviewer:** It's so good. Yeah.

[00:29:29] **Richard:** She, she'd go ahead and warm up, warm up some beans. Go ahead, put her put some chili, some beans, rice, nopales in there. It was delicious.

[00:29:44] **Interviewer:** That goes into a few of my questions. You mentioned that your family had a garden and so, of some sorts, you grew nopales. Was there anything else that they grew?

[00:29:57] **Richard:** We grew tomatoes. Believe. Maybe some squash. That's all I remember. I wasn't into the gardening my mom was at and then she was into having flowers. She loved flowers. When we first moved into the house, the flower beds were all overgrown, all, I mean, there was nothing there worth saving and stuff. But, she would go out there in the morning prior to it getting hot during the summertime, and she'd spend an hour or two literally on her hands and knees. What do they call it? Crab grass. She

would be taking that all out by hand and taking that to go ahead and tilling up the soil and stuff. And then inside two years, the house that we were in had the most beautiful, beautiful flowers in the whole neighborhood. And actually some of the neighbors came over and, which ended up being a friend of ours, Mrs. Weatherman. She came over in passing and talked to my mom, said, "*How do you make your flowers so?"* You know. They were in and that's how they became friends because, and then also her son and my brother went to high school together. So, but she, she grew flowers. She had her flower beds were all nice and stuff.

[00:31:24] **Richard:** But, the other thing that my mom was noted for was the bird lady. She had probably, what, between a half dozen or more birds at our house? And we even at one time had a, a dove that got hurt, hurt its wing and stuff could not fly. And she clipped the wings just so and. We have a picture of that dove on my dad's shoulder. For some reason that dove loved my dad. He'd come home and he'd and my mom always left the cage door open at times and he would, I don't know if it was a, he or she would come out and go sit on my dad's shoulder.

[00:32:14] **Interviewer:** Was this when your family was living in the —

[00:32:17] **Richard:** — In the house —

[00:32:18] **Interviewer:** — In the house —

[00:32:19] **Richard:** — Yeah —

[00:32:19] **Interviewer:** — The two bedroom house.

[00:32:20] **Richard:** Yes. And she had, I don't know, two car, two canaries. She had a couple of

[00:32:32] **Mary:** Parakeets.

[00:32:33] **Richard:** Parakeets. She had, oh, she had a couple of, I wanna say robins, the wild birds are outside. Somebody had knocked. One of the kids in the neighborhood had knocked a nest out of a tree and the birds were already had their feathers on 'em, but they couldn't fly or anything. And they, she says, "*Oh,"* so the lady whose nest was in brought her over, she goes, "*I don't know if they're gonna make it*." She goes, "*Oh yeah*", they, so my mom hand fed them with bread and milk and gave them water and stuff. And they, the two of them that they survived and she had. Yeah. We always had birds. I don't remember, I don't remember. The only place that I, we didn't have, that I remember was at the box car. We didn't have, we didn't have any birds there, but at the house we had a lot of birds.

[00:33:46] **Interviewer:** In the two other homes, the one in Oroville and Chico, did you also have birds as well or were there more?

[00:33:52] **Richard:** I don't, I don't remember it 'cause I was, I was young. Actually at the Chico house I believe we had a bird. Might have had a ca, might have had a canary or parakeet. But yeah, at the box car we didn't have any, 'cause it's, it was too hot. And once we had the home in West Sacramento is where, just like any family, you start gathering things.

[00:34:33] **Interviewer:** That goes into one of my questions where. I know you were quite young, but you have like great memory despite, you know, saying you, you were quite young. When you, when your family would move from box, would move from home to home to then boxcar, do you recall what items they would bring with 'em or perhaps what items you would bring?

[00:34:53] **Richard:** No, the, from moving from the house in Oroville to the house in Chico . The only thing that I remember that you know, just besides your normal dishes and clothes, the only thing I remember was that my mom brought her stove with her. That she found a stove that she liked and it was an older stove where they didn't make the stoves for a while, and then they do again where it had a griddle on top. And it was a gas stove. Four burner gas stove oven and stuff. And so, she had that. She loved that stove. She, I mean, she would cook. She was known. She was known for her cooking. [chokes up]

[00:35:52] **Richard:** And there was a, um, a friend of mine that I grew up in high school, he was a year younger than I that we ran around with and stuff. His dad was a handyman, I guess you'd call him at the time. Anyway, my mom wanted patio area and she wanted some cement laid so she wasn't walking in the grass and the mud were getting muddy after a while so. And I was in high school and so I asked him how to do it and stuff and then it came time to pour the cement and I asked him to come over and check everything. He goes, "*Well, this, this is not good.*" He says, "*'Cause you have going towards the house when it rains, you want the rain to flow away from it*." And he adjusted something. And my mom came to the back door and she says, "*Oh.*" She says, "*Are you here to help*?" And he goes, "*Well, I'm just looking at things*." She goes, "*Well, I just need to know because I know how much food to have.*" She says, she says, "*I'm having, I'm having tacos, rice, and beans*." And he goes, "*Well, I'm not sure.*" And he, he goes, (she goes) "*Well, let me know*." And so he thought about it for a while and he does. He goes, "*Your mom's gonna cook?*" And he goes, "*Yeah*." He says, "*Can I use your phone*?" I go, "*Yeah, why?*" He goes, "*Well, I have some, I have an appointment that I'm supposed to be working on and stuff. If your mom's cooking, I'm staying*." And that happened a couple of times with a couple of projects that happened when we widened our garage, or not the garage, I should say, the driveway to the garage, the same thing. A couple neighbors came over and she goes, "*Oh*," she says, "*If you guys are helping*," she says, "*I'm gonna go ahead*."

[00:37:47] **Richard:** So she. Like I said, she was known for her cooking and at Christmas time. She would make rice beans, the traditional rice beans and tortillas, and the neighbors would come over, but. She would make tamales all the time for Christmas, and that was her gift to hand out to some of the neighbors. And so, one of the things that I always did, and she would do 'em either for Christmas or for New Year's. And I would always spend New Year's Eve at my mom's. People wouldn't want to be working. He says, "*You're*," he says, "*Yeah*." He says, "*Yeah*." I lost a girlfriend one time because she thought, "*You're not, you're going out with the guys. You just don't want to take me*." I go,

"*No. I'm...*" I go, and so I came in two days later with this big batch of tamales that I was giving 'em to certain people and a—this gal that I knew because she was nice and where I was working at, we would trade hours or days off. So for her doing that, for me to thank her, I gave her some tamales. And the girl that I was seeing that she goes, "*What are those?*" I go, "*Those are tamales*." And she goes. (I said) "*This is what I was doing on New Year's Eve.*" And the girl (my co-worker) that says she goes, "*You made a big mistake when you left Richard, or actually when he left you*" so anyways, but yeah, she, and then, what's the big...

[00:39:20] **Mary:** Buñuelos

[00:39:20] **Richard:** Buñuelos

[00:39:21] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[00:39:22] **Richard:** She made, she would make a batch of those and I would take some of those into work and she would hand 'em again out to the neighbors and stuff. And one of the things was, at the time, she did not have a big power mixer. So, that was my job and the husband's job to make the masa for the tamales. And it was done by hand. And she would have, she would, she would make you turn that and turn it over turn. It was like making bread. But, I mean it, I mean, you were using this, if you want to call it the masa. I mean it was like five pounds 10 pounds and had it, and we would go ahead and do it, and she goes, "*No it's not ready yet*." And so that's what the husbands and I would do to go ahead and keep, you had to keep folding it and folding it, just like, I guess you do bread or pizza until shh, it got to the desired texture that she wanted. And then the women, the wives would go ahead and put the masa inside the husk. And then my mom would cook 'em and she would, I mean, they'd be there until 2, 3, 4 o'clock in the morning and she would be making batch after batch, after batch, after batch of tamales.

[00:40:50] **Interviewer:** I'm curious. So, the same food that she was making, like in the West Sacramento home, she would also make that like in the Oroville home in the Chico home? It would stay consistent?

[00:41:02] **Richard:** Yea, yeah, that was a stable, that was a stable for us to have rice, beans and tortillas and then whatever vegetables at the time were grown and stuff at the store or, you know, to, to go ahead and have. Like I said, never went hungry.

[00:41:32] **Richard:** And, oh, the other thing, one to jump back a little bit. When I was doing the cement in the backyard for clothesline and the patio during the summertime. And my friend Ron and his dad says, what he, he left to go get his cement tools and go, go change his clothes. And two friends of mine, they were twins, Gene and Dean. They were twins, and they came over and stayed. He says, "*A group of us is going to Folsom Lake*." He goes, "*Nah, I can't.*" I said, He says, "*What are you doing?*" He goes, he goes, "*Oh man*." He says, "*We got a big group, nice group*." He says, you know, tried to tempt us, "*The girls are gonna be there*." And I go, "*Can't go*." And my mom came out and she goes, "*Are you boys helping*?" And he goes, "*Well, we're going to go to Folsom*.". He goes (She goes), "*Oh, okay. Say I thought you were helping. I'm getting ready to go to the store and, go get, go get food to feed you guys after you're done*." And she goes inside and they, they're looking at me and he goes, "*Is your mom cooking*?" (I said) "*Yep*." He goes,

"*Oh, she's. What's she making?*" She goes (I go) "*The usual*," which they'd had before. I says, "*So she's making rice, beans, fresh tortillas, and she's making tacos and and enchiladas*." I think she said. She goes (He goes), "*Okay, tell her we're staying*." And he says, "*We gotta go get our work clothes*." They went home, came back with their work clothes so it made it really easy for Ron and I to go ahead and lay. I think we did four yards of cement? Five yards of cement? And because it had to be wheel barreled in from the front yard to the backyard, so it made it a lot easier. So his dad—Ron's dad did the finishing work and everything else while the boys opened in on the wheelbarrow. And then we got cleaned up. We went in and she opened up the, she had a table, an old, big old table. She opened that up and, "*Okay, sit down*." And she fed us all. [laughs] And then for Ron's dad helping and stuff, she kept a little out for him to take home. She goes, "*You boys eat what you want.*" She says, "*I don't want to save anything*." "*No, don't worry, there's nothing gonna be anything saved.*" She took, she took enough to go ahead and feed Ron's dad and his wife says, "*Oh, take this home with you guys. I appreciate what you did*".

[00:44:23] **Interviewer:** I'm curious 'cause you spoke like earlier about when you're younger, what you would. What you would like, who would you play with and like, kind of like the pets that you would have. Can you go more into detail about what, what type of toys you would play with, or maybe like what type of activities you would do with your family?

[00:44:41] **Richard:** When we were at the, at the houses that I recall in Oroville or Chico. My brother and sister went to school, so there was no, there was no kids for me to play with unless my cousins showed up. 'Cause we were that, 'cause the railroad house and the railroad construction was out on the outskirts of Chico at the time. So there was, there was no houses that I remember and it was on the streets that were located around there. I guess what you'd call an industrial area, was just warehouses. There was you know no houses, no apartments, just industrial work area. And when I was in Oroville, or we were in Oroville, again, we were literally, literally out in the country. There was, you could look in any direction and there was no houses. The construction yard and the foreman's house was out there in nowhere land. There was nothing out there, and the only person that I would be able to play with was Johnny when his dad brought him and that was it. Unless, my cousins came and played and stayed.

[00:46:10] **Interviewer:** So, Johnny's family. They didn't live near you, live, live near your family?

[00:46:15] **Richard:** No, they, they did not. When I was little, I don't remember where they lived. When I got older, Johnny's parents bought a house in Lincoln and that's the only home that I, I'm aware of and stuff. But he would. He would drive wherever at the time my dad was a foreman at. [Interviewer flips pages of the interview questions] And so, they would drive to where they were assigned to and then they would go do the work for the day. Or sometimes, depending on what direction, some of the guys would drive their personal vehicles to the job site because they could leave from there to go to go home instead of having to come back all the way back to the, to the railroad site construction yard.

[00:47:12] **Interviewer:** This is just like a question, why do you think your, your family's home or homes were so far away from other people? Do you have like a theory of like, why?

[00:47:22] **Richard:** Probably because of the construction area, because like I said the railroad had the land and they had the house and they had, I mean like the one. The one in Oroville, that construction yard was big because the tracks went in there and they could leave box cars in there so they wouldn't get broken into. The one in Chico, the only thing I remember was. The, where they kept material, tools and the shed and everything, where they kept the little putt putt car in and stuff wasn't as big as the one in Oroville and then the one in West Sacramento, that as far as the construction yard, was not that big. Uh, I mean, they kept. They had a warehouse where they kept material and they kept the little put putt car in. And then they had a small building that was the office and they kept a lot of the material out, outside that was in a fenced in area. The box cars did not go, did not go into the fence area. They were kept, they were kept out in the. Most of the time there was not a lot of box cars that I recall. At West Sacramento, the construction yard there were left out and stuff because the trains would bring 'em and they might stay a day or two. And another train to come and pick 'em up, take 'em wherever they were going. But, yeah, the biggest yard was the one in Oroville because train tracks would come right in front of the house and then they could, some tracks would go into the construction yard where they could leave the car, the box cars at, or they would continue on.

[00:49:33] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[00:49:36] **Richard:** Like I said, and then when we moved to West Sacramento. Again, that area was industrial area. There was nothing around there. It was close enough to where my sister and brother could walk to catch the bus, but I wasn't old enough or big enough to walk down there. And I don't know if they had any, any kids there or anything.

[00:50:05] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[00:50:05] **Richard:** And then I had two, the two dogs, black lab and a yellow lab that kept me company. And again, I mean, I was there and. [chuckles] I may not have had any playmates per se, but I mean, I could, I could go ahead and throw as many rocks as I wanted to at anything and everything. [taps hand on table] And, I mean, I didn't know any difference. And until we moved into the house and then I had other kids to play with when we moved into the house in West Sacramento.

[00:50:51] **Interviewer:** How old were you, were you when you moved into the home in West Sacramento?

[00:50:55] **Richard:** I was five because I remember going there and then I remember because my mom wanted that house because it was near, what was it? One, let's see, one, two, two blocks away or three blocks away there was a grammar school that was from kindergarten to kindergarten to sixth grade. And then there was a grammar school. I don't, did you guys go to the grammar school? Before going to high school or you guys were already in high school?

Mary: Two years.

Richard: So they had a grammar school that was seventh and eighth grade.

[00:51:49] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[00:51:49] **Richard:** That you could walk to when you were that age and then you could walk farther to go to the high school.

[00:51:59] **Interviewer:** Everything was in walking distance so, more or less.

[00:52:02] **Richard:** More or less. And then, yes. But, I only went to that grammar school from kindergarten to sixth. I was only there for one year because the church. The church built a, Parochial school. I'm Catholic, so, one of the people that owned property out there, you may not know if you're not from Sacramento area, but out towards, which is now closed is the Pheasant Club, out past there. There was a man that owned property that was a farmer and he donated like five or 10 acres in the, between people donating money and Catholic diocese having money. They built a Parochial school out there and that's where I went to second to eighth grade.

[00:53:14] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[00:53:15] **Richard:** And that was not within walking distance. But I did walk, I did have to walk home at times during the summertime because I was too busy, too busy playing and I missed my ride. [laughs] And there was, actually, there was on occasion, there was anywhere from two to six of us that walked. Because we were too busy playing. And, the moms told you, they said "*If you're not here, I'm leaving you*." You know, we thought, "*They're not gonna leave us.*" Sure enough. They left us. [laughs] So, we ended up walking up.

[00:53:52] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[00:53:53] **Richard:** Which was fun because, again it was the tracks that my dad worked on. So, you know, I knew, I knew the tracks and so we'd walk, walked the tracks. And then, you know, I'd walked in. I, unfortunately, I lived the farthest away, so probably the last two miles. Two. Yeah, two miles or so. I walked by myself, but it was in the neighborhood and stuff, and I knew the neighborhood.

[00:54:22] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[00:54:23] **Richard:** 'Cause a couple of friends that were going to that Parochial school, lived in that neighborhood and then on occasion I would visit them at their house.

[00:54:36] **Interviewer:** That's far. Last two miles.

[00:54:37] **Richard:** It was. Well —

[00:54:40] **Interviewer:** — You had to walk by yourself.

[00:54:42] **Richard:** Well, from where we lived to out, just past the Pheasant Club out there, I was gonna say probably six, seven miles, maybe, I don't know, five miles.

[00:54:55] **Interviewer:** It's a long walk.

[00:54:56] **Richard:** Yes, it is.

[00:54:57] **Interviewer:** It's a long walk.

[00:54:57] **Richard:** Especially during the summertime when it's hot and you have no water and you're lugging your bag of books.

[00:55:08] **Interviewer:** I want to. I wanna transition to talking about your family, but would you mind taking a break? We've been speaking for quite a while.

[00:55:16] **Richard:** No, we can take a break. That would be good.

[00:55:17] **Interviewer:** Okay. Awesome.

{Took a 15-20 minute break}

[00:55:19] **Interviewer:** Okay, so we are recording. Also do not, I'm probably gonna cut this part out a little. We're recording. That's not important. Okay, so we're back from our break.

[00:55:42] **Interviewer:** I want to go into family. So can you tell me a little bit about your parents, anything you'd like to talk about?

{Stopped recording}

[00:56:00] **Interviewer:** Okay, so we are recording. Okay, awesome.

[00:56:07] **Interviewer:** So I'm going to be talking about family life. So can you describe the family dynamic?

[00:56:16] **Richard:** It was good. You know, everybody loved each other. And know I can say that my sister took care of me. Most of all, she's always there for me.

[00:56:34] **Richard:** Um, my sister took, [voice wavers] took me places with her, with her sometimes she wanted to or not. [laughs] And, I remember we went to her girlfriend's house that wasn't too far away. I don't recall her name. The tall blonde-headed gal. Oh, yes. Ellen Hamshire, I think. And when I go, I, if she was going over there, I would. I would want to go over there because Ellen's mom, every time I went there, she always baked cookies for me and had nice milk and stuff. She, 'cause they didn't have boys, they just

had, I believe just two girls. Ellen was the oldest and then they had a younger daughter. Uh, but yeah, her mom, she loved me. She, she'd take me while they were visiting or doing whatever they were doing. I mean, she would make a batch of cookies for me. And there was very seldom that was some to take home. She said, "*Oh, you can take some home*." And I go, "*I'm not taking any home 'cause I'm gonna have to share with my brother and I'm not gonna do that.*" And so, yeah, she, she'd sit me down and have a nice big glass of milk and do that.

[00:57:59] **Richard:** And then there was times also, I remember [laughs] she, my sister took me to, Mary, took me to the state fair and she told me, she says, "*If we get separated, says you're to go ahead and go meet us at the Bears if we ever get separated."* And we did one time and I asked, "*I need to know where the bears are*." And he says, "*Well you...*", somebody would go. And then I'd ask again and I'd be there. And then a little while later, my sister would show up with her friends and stuff and go, go ahead and, and pick me up. She says, "*You're not gonna take off. You need, not take off* ." I says, "*I didn't. You guys walked away and you didn't take me with you.*" But anyway.

[00:58:48] **Richard:** So, and then I remember one time, [laughs] I don't know her and her friends who graduated, but it was Ellen, Nancy and my sister. And my mom wasn't home at the time. She, believe she was working and they were playing the radio and stuff. But I was going into high school and they said, "*Oh, you're gonna love high school.*" And I go, "*I don't know. You know, this is*". 'Cause my brother viewed it as he told me. He says, "*You're gonna be a freshman. You're bottom at the food change and you're gonna get picked on and every*," blah, blah, blah and everything else. And so I wasn't too excited to go to high school except for the fact that I was gonna be playing football. And so they said, "*Oh, you gotta go*." And then they says, "*You'll love it. And then this is where you get to meet girls.*" And I'm thinking, "*Oh great*." And so they took an evening or that day and stuff they were playing and Nancy and. Nancy tried me, the best teacher you 'cause she was short, like my sister so, it was easy. She says, "*No*," I (she) says, "*You gotta put your hand here and do this*" and stuff trying to, trying to show me how to dance slow. She goes, "*No, this is, this is where the guys really like the music*." [laughs] And I go, "*Yeah, no, no*." And I, I remember stepping on her more than once.

[01:00:22] **Richard:** And then, and then Ellen danced with her and she was, she was rather tall. She was like 6' 1". 6' 3". So when I was dancing with her, I mean I was, I was short when I first started high school and stuff. And it is right there and I go, "*Oh man, this is really*". It, it felt really, really awkward compared to dancing with Nancy 'cause she was my height. But I survived. And I did enjoy the dances.

[01:00:55] **Richard:** And then my brother was older, he was quite a bit older. He was, I think almost seven years older than I am. So he didn't take me anywhere. And I was always an intrusion upon him. And he, like I said, he never took me, took me anywhere and his friends would tease me, especially Bob, Mr. Weath, Mr. And Mrs. Weatherman who lived down the street. He was the worst. He always teased me and stuff and everything and when, this was the time period where the Vietnam War was going on, and so he got drafted, he went into the army, he left. And he came back after he did his time in Vietnam. By that time when he left, I was really short. I was like 5' 2", 5' 4". When he came back I was 5' 10", 210 pounds. And I was, because he just got back from Vietnam and he heard that my brother was home on leave. He came over to visit and stuff and opened the door and he looks, he looks at me, he goes, "*You've grown a little bit*." And I

go, "*Just a bit*." I says, "*You want to*." And I says, "*Do you want to wrestle again*?" He goes, "*No, thank you*." But anyway, uh, high school was good. I enjoyed it. Played, I played four years of football. Captain for two years. But yeah.

[01:02:35] **Richard:** And then. When my brother was in the service, he bought a 63' or 64' Chevy Impala and he brought it and he had to go back for like a week or two and he wanted to leave his car because he was going to be here for like two weeks on leave. So he left his car and so I got a hold of the car keys and I took it out and I took my girlfriend out and I got a ticket for speeding down K Street exhibition and "*Oh great*." So I didn't tell him. So about three months later he gets a ticket for speeding and he's in court 'cause he wants to fight it. And he's in court and he's, and the judge says, "*Oh*," he says, "*I see you got two tickets for speeding*." The judge was going to really put the hammer down to, he goes "*Two?*" He goes, "*No, I only have one*." He goes, "*Well, according to our records, according to your vehicle right here*," he says, "*You got a ticket in, in June, such and such. Now you have one three months later*." He says, "*That's not good*." And he goes, "*Who? Who's got the ticket?*" And the judge read my name, he goes, "*That's my little brother*." He says, "*I remember that I left my car there and he stole the keys*." He said, he goes, "*That's your brother?*" He goes, "*Yeah*." He goes, "*Well then you're lucky 'cause this is then your first ticket*" and stuff. But yeah, when he came back, he was mad. [laughs] He goes, "*Why didn't you tell me?"* He goes, "*Just for this reason. 'cause I knew you were gonna get mad.*"

[01:04:09] **Richard:** But anyway, after my brother, he came out and served and he was using his GI bill to go to school and I was graduating high school and he helped me get, what do you call it? A couple of grants to go to school and stuff. I had grades to get that and stuff. So he helped me. And then he's helped me throughout time, just like my sister has. And I can say now that, you know, from getting into high school and before where he had no time for me, he's always had time for me now, just like my sister. [speaks quickly toward the end and chokes up]

[01:04:57] **Interviewer:** Would you say that, you and your siblings were relatively close when you were growing up or? 'Cause —

[01:05:04] **Richard:** — No. No.

[01:05:04] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:05:05] **Richard:** I was close to my sister.

[01:05:06] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:05:07] **Richard:** But not, not so close to my brother. Like I said, he was older and, at that age gap and stuff. I was more of a nuisance to him [laughs] where there wasn't that big of an age gap between my sister and I. And like I said, she always had time for me to care of me throughout my life even now. And then, it wasn't until after, I got outta high school that my brother, our relationship got better and grew. And where it's, and it's good. It's really good right now and stuff. I mean, we each grew up. I grew up, got married, married my high school sweetheart, and unfortunately got divorced [laughs] and then I

got remarried and stuff. So, we, we matured and grew on each other. And it's funny that my brother, when he first. He always wanted property in a ranch. And when he did, finally he had some acreage out in Elk Grove. He was more of a book person where he could read out of a book, explain it to you, how to do things until he really, had his ranch where he himself had to learn how to do things. And the neighbors, he had two really good neighbors that were willing to show him how to do things and stuff. Um, but yeah, I mean, our relationship grew better as time went on as we each got older.

[01:06:59] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:07:01] **Richard:** But like I said, when I was in high school, in the earlier part of my years, I was more of a little kid to my brother and a nuisance.

[01:07:14] **Interviewer:** If anything.

[01:07:15] **Interviewer:** I wanted to actually ask one of the questions is, you're going right now to the, to the present, which is great. I want to go backwards and ask you the question. How did living in so close to the railroads, right, your family's like a railroad family, How would you say that affected your life?

[01:07:45] **Richard:** [long pause before answering] For me, it didn't affect it negatively. I mean, as growing up. Even though I didn't have other kids to play with, I, you know, I didn't know any different. So it wasn't, it was not, it wasn't important to me to have somebody to play with though at times as I mentioned Johnny would come and visit and he was, he was my playmate. The railroad, you know, as far as everything that was, I mean, I liked every, all the activity, the motion, everything else, the trains and everything. And even to this day, I like 'em. Matter of fact, I'm planning some trips to go look at some other, other railroads. The trains in Nevada and the trains up in, like the skunk train and then going up into Oregon and Washington to go view some of the older trains.

[01:08:38] **Interviewer:** You should go to the exhibit in Chicago. They're gonna have an exhibit about box car living.

[01:08:44] **Richard:** Oh.

[01:08:44] **Interviewer:** Actually, if you wanna go to Chicago, if you're ever. Maybe not right now. It's kind of cold, but.

[01:08:49] **Richard:** I've been to Chicago once. My two sons, Aaron and Chris. It was, what would you call it? One of those things that I wanted to do in life and stuff to go see. To go see the Green Bay Packers to Chicago Bears play. [chokes up] So they took me for my birthday. Which I was surprised we were supposed to go my youngest son has tickets to, to USC, and so he says, "*Oh, we're gonna go there and stuff*." He says, "*But, due to the time constraints, we're gonna fly down there.*" And I go, "*Okay*." So we get up extremely early in the morning, I mean I never had so much coffee in the morning [chuckles] to try and wake up and stuff. So we're there. We get, we Uber to the airport and we're there and get up into the check in. And, so we're there and the lady announces, "*We're now taking people on flight number so-and-so*" and so, and I, they call me and said, "*Okay,*

dad, we're going." So we're in the plane and says, "*We got a slight delay. We have slight mechanical problems.*" Says, "*It's gonna be a while. Please, please remain seated. If you need to use the bathroom, please use it before we take off."* And so we're there, we're sitting down and we take off. And I thought, "*Man, this is a long flight*." You know, and, the lady, and I wasn't even paying attention. I was talking to, one of my boys and the lady came over to the intercom. She says, "*We'll be arriving*," I can't think of the name of the airport in Chicago.

[01:10:41] **Interviewer:** O'Hare.

[01:10:41] **Richard:** O'Hare Airport.

[01:10:42] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:10:42] **Richard:** She goes, "*We'll be arriving in a, in a half hour, so please be seated and fasten your seat belts*" and stuff. Like, I guess that's one of the, you know, airport thingies at LAX 'cause I've, I've been to LAX a couple of times and that was massive. And so we landed stuff, we get out of the plane and stuff and I'm looking around, I said, this does not look like our airport and stuff. And finally, and I'm looking around and I see, welcome to O'Hare Chicago Airport. And I go, "*We're not in LA*." They started laughing and stuff. "*Dad, for your birthday and stuff, you always said you wanted to see these guys play, so we brought cha*". [chokes up] And like I am now, I immediately started crying and stuff. And my youngest son, he brings out his phone and he's taking, you know, video of it stuff. I said, "*Turn that thing off. Turn that thing off*." So we went and we Ubered to our hotel and my oldest son had things planned out. So, we went, had, we got there mid-morning and we dropped off our bags and went and had something to eat. And he says, "*Okay*." He says, "*Now we gotta go*."

[01:12:03] **Richard:** We went to this building that has glass walls on it and the floor slides out in Chicago and it is up there. And when you look out the window and you look down at the people of the cars. People look like ants and the cars look like those little hot cars. And when was there, when we first got there, we finally got to go into our little glass cubicle and we had a picture, excuse me, a picture taken professionally by a photographer there. And she, she goes, "*You guys need to move to your left about three feet*." So my youngest son and I, we both looked down and there's nothing but glass and just like you see on t.v. where you see things go booooooooop just like that. It was just like that [laughs] and he and I start wobbling and my oldest son goes, "*You guys all right?*" And I go, "*Don't touch me*." And my youngest son, Chris goes, "*Don't touch me*" he goes. "*You guys gotta move over*" the lady said. "*Don't touch me*", and we're wobbling. He goes, "*We need the picture taken*," he says, "*Scoot over*." So we shimmied over and stuff and she goes, "*That's good right there."* And she goes, "*Look up*." She goes, "*You guys have to open your eyes*." [laughs] 'Cause I, for me, I still had mine because I was, I was instantly dizzy when I looked down then I went, opened 'em and stuff and had finally got used to. But I didn't look down anymore and there was people that were in these glass cubes that were next to this lady, she literally hung on, tried to hang onto the glass and she had to be helped out and stuff. She had to sit down 'cause she, it affected her that much. So, but we had a good time. Drove from Chicago to Green Bay, Wisconsin, saw the game and ironically, we were just on the 40 yard line on the home team side, and we're going there and we sit down and my son goes, "*You're not gonna believe this*." And my oldest son,

Aaron's sitting to the left, he goes, "What are you talking about?" He goes, "Guess where these people are from that we're sitting next to?" (He goes,) "I don't know." He goes, "They are from Folsom, California." I go, "*You're kidding*?" He goes, "*No*." There was a, well, it would be the grandmother, the mother, the daughter and the son-in-law that they were there to watch. And the grandmother, same thing. She always wanted to go. She was a Packers fan and she always wanted to go to Packer Bear game. So, she finally made it. They treated her to it and stuff. And we talked and watched the game and stuff. The Packers won. Which made it even that more exciting and stuff. And I spent too much money in the gift shop, which is in the basement, but that's neither here nor there. But yeah, and then stayed overnight, drove back and flew out of O'Hare, and flew back to Sacramento. That's one of the memory trips that I'll have for a lifetime with my kids.

[01:15:35] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:15:35] **Richard:** The only thing that I sorry about is that my daughter didn't go. She couldn't take the time off, but that would've been perfect.

[01:15:42] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm. Do you think about your family actually is one of the questions I wanna ask is like, Can you tell me a little bit about yourself? Cause we spoken about the past, like, you know, Who is this person in front of me? Who's Richard Garcia? Like, What would you like to share for people to know?

[01:16:01] **Richard:** I'm a private person, so and so I'd have to think about it what that involves. I grew up, or I was born a hundred miles here, north of here in Chico, California. My childhood was with the railroad, and I enjoyed that. I didn't know any different to, you know, to have any other, any other thing.

[01:16:22] **Richard:** When we moved into our house, that was a total different experience because of the fact that now there were boundaries. People had a, people had, houses, they had grassy areas, and there was some people that did not want you walking on their lawn. [laughs] So it was different, but the nice thing about it was that there was a lot of kids in the neighborhood and there were kids that were a little younger than me and a little older than me, which, you know, which was okay. Everybody got along and then. Friday, you know, Friday or Saturday night, you know, the kids all got together and we played normal kids stuff. We played tag, we played, you know, ball and there was enough kids in the neighborhood where we could go ahead and play baseball.

[01:17:20] **Richard:** But yeah. And then upon entering high school was totally different. I almost didn't go to the high school that I attended because my mom wanted me to go to the same high school that my brother graduated from which was Christian Brothers. And I did not want to go there. I mean, I would've had to have gotten up at five in the morning, get dressed, go down and catch three or four different buses to get to there, because my mom was working and she could not drive me to school. And I talked and make, and she gave me an ultimatum and she goes, "*You're smart enough to do something with yourself. You*." She says, "*I'll tell you what, you cannot get anything less than a B on your report card. You get a B, you're going to Christian Brothers, even if I take you two hours early before I have to go to work and that's where you're gonna go to school*." I go, "*I'm not going to Christian Brothers,*" because at that time it was an all voice school and the brothers that taught there, they were mean. I mean, I grew up, I went to school at a

Parochial grammar school, and the nuns were mean. The brothers were even meaner and there was nothing in regards to them slapping you upside the head or whatever. The nuns would hit you with their ruler, but the brothers would actually hit you. And my brother told me about it. He goes, "*You don't want to go there*." So, and between my brother talking to my mom and myself, I was able to go to the high school that my sister graduated from and then the high school that my brother attended to for three years. So I had a good time there and stuff. Like I said, I played football for four years, was one of the captains for two years, my sophomore year and my senior year. I enjoyed high school. I didn't do anything serious to get in trouble. Never got suspended, had good grades.

[01:19:51] **Richard:** And then at that time the Vietnam War was going on and I had to go on my 18th birthday, you had to go sign up for your to get your card. So my mom was gonna go with me, and she cried that whole morning, I remember. And a friend of mine that I made in high school, Steve, his, she wanted to go down some, she's gonna take the four of us. We're gonna go and my mom says, "*I can't do it. I can't go*." So, she didn't go. And Steve's mom drove us down there and we registered for the draft. And my mom must have done a lot of praying because I never got the call to go drafted. That was when they had the lottery system. And for two years I watched the numbers come up for the lottery and I knew that I was going to be drafted because of the fact that upon my birthday when they pulled them out of the hat to so to speak, I was never above a hundred. And if you were not above a hundred, you knew you were gonna get drafted. And the year that it counted for me, I was above 300. So I did not get drafted. And there was a friend of mine that I pailed around in high school, he was always telling me, "*You're going, you're going. You might as well concede yourself that you are going.*" And I go, "*No*." I says, "*If I go, I go*." And he was never, never below 250. Oh, when he finally got his birthday pulled out of the hat, he was like number three or four, and he ended up, he ended up going and he waited and he says, he says, "*I'm not*", he says, "*I'm not signing up*." He says, "I'll wait until I get my letter." And he got his letter from them. Said he was being drafted into the army. And he spent two years there. And fortunately he came back. But, when I went to, to my first class reunion for high school, they put pictures and names and then they had a, if you want to call it, kind of like a memory thing where there was couple guys that I graduated with that got drafted that did not come back. And I came to find out a little later that there was some guys I played ball with in the year behind me and in the year ahead of me. There was total of seven between those three years that did not come back.

[01:22:59] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:23:02] **Richard:** So, that was kind of hard to take, especially since knowing some of them on a personal level playing football with them. Yeah, that was, that was a hard time for everybody.

[01:23:21] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:23:22] **Richard:** And like I said, my mom must have done a lot of praying for, for me to get a number so high. [chokes up] Um, speaking of my mom, she was a good person. [chokes up] She was. [pause] She only had like a fifth grade education. [chokes up] She was. She was very smart with numbers. I remember her helping my dad because he had a, well, kind of a weekly report, but then he had a monthly report that he had to turn in

and there was a lot of numbers on it and stuff. And my mom would, they would sit down on a Saturday or Sunday and she would help him do his tallying and everything. My mom was an exceptional cook. [chokes up]

[01:24:38] **Interviewer:** What were some of the favorite things that would make, that you enjoyed?

[01:24:42] **Richard:** Yeah. Everything. Everything. [laughs] The biggest thing was when she made, when buñuelos and tamales. Oh,. She would make, she'd make pork tamales, chicken, but pork. And then once in a while when we, we talked her out of making what they call sweet tamales.

[01:25:07] **Interviewer:** Oh, elote. Tamales de elote.

[01:25:10] **Richard:** Yeah. I mean, us three kids got together, "*You don't have to make those again."* They were terrible. She made 'em, I think once or twice. And, I mean, we didn't eat 'em, so she ended up giving them away and stuff and. Yeah, they were terrible. Didn't like those at all. But yeah. She, you know, everything, she made was good, really good.

[01:25:46] **Richard:** She had to learn to drive when my dad passed away. [chokes up] And I think my sister was with her. She didn't have her license for six weeks or whatever, and she got pulled over from running a stop sign. I remember she was so mad about that. She got—she tried arguing with the highway patrolman who happened to be directly behind her and she, it was kind of a hill and then the railroad. She was driving over the railroad tracks and she saw the sign and she stopped too far back and she stopped on one side of the railroad tracks and she went down to the stop sign and looked and went through and she got pulled over and the CHP, "*You needed to stop*." And she goes, "*I did. I stopped*." She goes, (The CHP goes) "*No, you stopped too far back"* and stuff. "*It's right there.*"

[01:26:49] **Richard:** But yeah, I remember she, when she got her, and that's the only ticket she got while she was driving and she would never drive on the freeway. She always drove in town and we had to show her. I had to show her how to get around Sacramento. At that time, Sacramento had a lot of one-way streets and so I says, "*Just look at this*." And I says, "*Here's, here's the street that you want to get on to go home and when you see the bridge, you know you're going the right direction*" and stuff. And she got sidetracked one time and she went over, well we used to call it, the locals call it the Black bridge, but it was the I Street bridge. She panicked and stuff. She was right there. She never went over that again. She made sure she never went over 'cause that was a very, very narrow —

[01:27:43] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:27:45] **Richard:** bridge. And then at the time, the tomato trucks drove over that, which they were always on the line or a little over the line. And I remember being with my dad and stuff where he almost got sideswiped and the guy in front of us, the truck

actually sideswiped the car in front of us and broke off his side view mirror because he, the bridge was really, really narrow.

[01:28:17] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:28:18] **Richard:** A lot of people would avoid going over that because of that. Then it shook a little bit when the trains would go underneath it. But yeah, I mean, you know, and once my mom knew the streets and stuff and she always parked at the top of Montgomery Wards and she would walk everywhere. When we bought, bought our house in West Sacramento, we'd walk up to the train tracks and we'd walk and we'd walk into town and it was fun going there because you weren't carrying anything. And we would go and go walk everywhere and then we'd go and walk because as I mentioned, my dad, construction yard, railroad yard. It was next to the Capitol Bridge, so we'd walk over there to get a ride home. But on occasions we didn't. We walked in there and she had to get back and we walked back and carrying stuff and everything. As I mentioned, going there was fun because it was along the tracks, and me as a kid had all kinds of rocks to throw and stuff, but when you come back and you got stuff to carry, it's not so fun.

[01:29:41] **Interviewer:** Um —

[01:29:41] **Richard:** The —

[01:29:42] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:29:43] **Richard:** But as I mentioned, when my dad passed away, she had to learn to drive, and she looked like a little kid behind the steering wheel. She'd be sitting on two pillows. The seat would be all the way forward and she'd have a pillow behind her. She was, I don't think she was even five feet tall.

[01:30:04] **Interviewer:** She was less than five foot.

[01:30:06] **Richard:** She was either five foot or a little bit less. She was not that tall.

[01:30:10] **Interviewer:** She looks really tall in the photos, in all photos.

[01:30:13] **Richard:** She is not. She is not. She. If she's standing next to my sister, she looks really as tall or tall, but she was not. And she. Yeah, she would on occasion, she'd get feisty. My dad would tell her, tell her to calm down. He would say, "*Calm down*." He'd say it in Mexican. He'd tell her to calm down. He says, "*God will take care of things. God will sort things out*."

[01:30:50] **Interviewer:** Can you speak a little bit about the relationship between your mother and your father? Like what you saw as a child?

[01:30:58] **Richard:** Good, excellent. [chokes up]

[01:31:06] **Richard:** The thing I remember most is that they never argued in front of us. Not once. I remember waking up 'cause I don't know if I heard them or having to go to the bathroom, but they were in the kitchen talking and a little loud 'cause I could hear, the bathroom was next to the kitchen so I could hear them and stuff. And, but yeah, I mean, they never, never argued in front of us, [chokes up] or at least in front of me. Um.

[01:31:58] **Interviewer:** So there was like a lot of respect. There was a lot of respect between like your father and your mother through conversation with like your other siblings. Like they respected each other.

[01:32:09] **Richard:** They did.

[01:32:09] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:32:16] **Richard:** There was a lot there like I said. They never argued in front of us. Very, very seldom one of 'em ever raised their voice at the other that I remember. [laughs before contining] Um, and when, when my mom and dad first got married, my mother didn't know how to cook that well, but he ate everything. And, and I remember when I, when I got married. My mom telling me, "*Even if you don't like something. Don't say it tastes bad. Don't say that*." She says, "*You tell her like your dad told me that was okay. But, if you don't want to cook it again, that's, that's okay too*." And after a while and she figured out that he didn't care for it. So yeah, she, she learned to cook on a wood stove. And when we were in the box car , the railroad yard in West Sacramento, that's what she cooked on and had all our meals. She cooked all our meals. She baked, but yeah.

[01:33:47] **Interviewer:** Can I ask you about your, about your father?

[01:33:51] **Richard:** I'm trying to get to that and I'm having a, I'm real having a real hard time. [Interviewer laughs]

[01:33:55] **Interviewer:** It's okay. I'm curious because I been speaking about your, I spoke with your other siblings and they talked about your grandma, so —

[01:34:03] **Richard:** Oh —

[01:34:04] **Interviewer:** I'm curious about like, did she continue, she would go back and forth, is what they would say. So when you lived, let's say, in the West Sacramento home.

[01:34:16] **Interviewer:** That's a lot of noise [noise from the outside is heard inside the Big 4 Conference room].

[01:34:17] **Interviewer:** The West Sacramento home, did she stay with you, with your family?

[01:34:22] **Richard:** She would stay overnight on occasion and stuff. She would stay, she always had, well sometimes she had a roommate and sometimes she didn't, but she

always stayed near the Catholic churh. Trying to remember the name. The Mexican, the Mexican church.

[01:34:43] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:34:44] **Richard:** I want say off of T Street —

[01:34:46] **Interviewer:** — on South Side park.

[01:34:47] **Richard:** The, by South side Park. Our was our Lady of Guadalupe Church. She always stayed near there because she would walk every morning to go to mass and then she would help out cleaning the church. She would help out cooking at the bazaars and stuff and everything. So everybody you know, knew her and stuff. But yeah, she would stay with us, you know, for a day or so, or we would go, you know, go visit her and stuff and then we would pick her up to go visit other relatives. Had aunt that lived in Elk Grove. Had an aunt that lived off of Fruitridge Road and what street off of that I don't remember. I was too small. But yeah, and on occasion I would stay with my cousin there off of Fruitridge. On occasion, I would stay with my cousins that had, they actually had a ranch. My uncle. He wanted property. And so he and my aunt bought property and they had some acreage where he had just like a normal, he had horses, cows, pigs, chickens, goats. And actually my uncle there he worked for Sac Northern at your hub over here when it was operating. That's where he worked at and retired out of there.

[01:36:35] **Interviewer:** Did you —

[01:36:35] **Richard:** — My aunt worked for the state that was married to my uncle that worked for the railroad. My other aunt, I don't think she worked. Yeah, I don't recall her working.

[01:36:50] **Interviewer:** Would you say that a lot of your family, your aunts, uncles, that they worked for the railroad or they were kind of a mixture of railroad and like non-railroad?

[01:36:59] **Richard:** No. The only one that worked at. I remember was my aunt, was my, was my uncle that lived out in Elk Grove. He was the only one that worked for railroad. Everybody else had their own jobs and stuff and we would get together. Seemed like. Well, during the summertime anyway, we would get together whether it be at Woodyland Park or there was a park that was, can't recall the name of it. That was between West Sacramento and Woodland that was there. El Visia Park? [looks toward Mary] And that's where people gathered and they had a swimming hole there and everything else. And they had a , a makeshift racetrack. And that's, where a lot of the Mexican people would gather and stuff and then the men would bring in their horses and they'd race 'em around the track and stuff.

[01:38:04] **Interviewer:** Like they had horses? Like their own personal horses and they would like do big —

[01:38:08] **Richard:** Yes. Yeah. My uncle had one, two, three, four horses. And then he brought up a, a big, I remember this. This big black stallion, he brought him up from Mexico and I don't know what the height is and I don't know what they call him by hands, but he was like 21 hands, which is big for a horse. My cousin Mike, he was what, like 6' 1", 6' 3"? And when my cousin stood next to him on his backside, the only thing you saw was from his nose up. That's how, that's, I mean, this horse. And he was mean. He was mean. He, if you went near the fence, he'd come and bite you. And he, like, my uncle [laughs] would make my oldest cousin Mike ride him because he's, he had to get the exercise, he had to get used to the rider being on him for the races.

[01:39:14] **Richard:** And I remember I was visiting and one of my other cousins came out of the barn. He left the door open and that horse saw it and he went running through there and my cousin had to jump because the horse was going into the barn. And then another time [laughs]. My uncle was fixing the corral next to, and the horse was in the corral, and he just took his time, he wandered around, he wandered around, wandered around, and he waited until my cousin or my uncle got next to the fence and reached over and bit him, bit him in the, in the, in the shoulder. And that was the biggest mistake that horse ever made because at the time, like I said, my uncle was fixing the fence and he had a two by four in his hand. He turned around and spun around and nailed him right between the eyes. He buckled that horse's, that horse's knees. He went down and stuff. My aunt happened to be coming out to the garden. She goes, "*You killed him! You killed him*!" [laughs] He goes, and after that, that horse obeyed my uncle to no end. Alls he had to do was have a two by four and if he didn't come when he called him, he'd tap it on next to the fence, and that horse came right over.

[01:40:35] **Richard:** And then another time [laughs] we had a big barbecue because my—same thing, my uncle had a temper [laughs] and he, he kicked one of the pigs 'cause it got out of the pen and got into the garden and he kicked it. Well, we had a barbecue the next day [laughs] because he, he killed the pig and he was an excellent, excellent cook. Barbecue. He'd do one of those big ground with the, with the leaves and everything else. Wow.

[01:41:10] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:41:11] **Richard:** Oh when the kids graduated from high school and when they confirmed stuff, had a big, big barbecue and he did, he would do a pig or actually that's where I learned. And I didn't know the difference at the time I was young and that's where I learned to be able to eat lamb and goat 'cause they had lambs or he'd buy lamb and stuff and everything. I mean, it smelled different, tasted a little different. But you know, i, it was how he cooked it really made a big difference and stuff. And he'd cook it for like a day or more in that pit.

[01:41:51] **Interviewer:** In my my, I guess it was my tio ,well my mom's cousin. I'm not sure. They do the same thing. They have, they have , they have an horno, and it's above ground and it take the whole day just to —

[01:42:04] **Richard:** — Yeah —

[01:42:04] **Interviewer:** — just to cook it. It's a long process.

[01:42:07] **Richard:** Yeah, it is. And stuff. And like I said, he had, he, he'd go in and cook the goat, the lamb. I mean, to where like, people now when you go to a barbecue place, if you grab a hold of the bone and tap it on the plate, the meat just falls off. He cooked it that, I mean, it was that good and whatever spices or whatever. I mean, just really, really good. Yeah, I mean, and we had some big family functions. I mean, where, 'cause we had relatives all over the place. We had relatives in Vacaville, you know, the Sacramento area and stuff. And my one aunt, that was in Vacaville, who was between two husbands, she had 12 kids [laughs]. And then actually, and then another aunt, one of my mom's sister, she lived in Southside Park and between two husbands, she had 12 kids. But yeah, that, I mean, we would have big, big, big family doings out at Woodland Park or whatever. And then the family that was in Vacaville would come up and my one cousin, his parents, they bought a house and with a big, big, big yard. I mean, it was so big that when people were coming over for the kids and stuff, we had, we could go ahead and play baseball in the backyard with a wiffle ball and they had badminton. You know, and played basketball out in the front. I mean, there was something to do, you know, if you wanted to right there and stuff. And then, he actually, one couple of times he bought a big doughboy pool so the kids could go swimming. Which was really nice and stuff. And then if you are little and I just happened to be too big, but except for my older cousin and stuff to be picked up and thrown in the pool [laughs]. But yeah, I mean it was good. And it was strictly, strictly old school traditional Mexican, probably European style and stuff where the men sat at the table first and they got fed and then the kids and everybody else ate after that. But the men, the adult men always ate first. And that was traditional.

[01:45:02] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm. I wanna ask, 'cause we're nearing the end of the oral history, you've answered like all my questions, like except for a few and that's okay. If there's anything that you would like to add that maybe I didn't ask you.

[01:45:21] **Richard:** I'm trying to get to my dad and real having a hard time.

[01:45:28] **Richard:** Um.

[01:45:42] **Richard:** [pauses and take a breath before speaking] He was good.

[01:45:46] **Richard:** Out of the, I remember, um, between my mom and him my mom was always the, if you want to call it, she always took care of business on the spot. What I mean by that, if you did something wrong, you got dealt with on the spot, you didn't get dealt with, you know. There was none of this like I heard, and I wished, you know, my mom would do it. I'd hear the other moms say, "*You wait until your dad gets home*." There was none of that. You did something wrong and you got dealt with on the spot.

[01:46:30] **Richard:** One of the things, I remember, you did and you did not. She did not like you being in the kitchen when she was cooking. And I remember, I don't know, one time my brother did somethin, whatever, and she went, she went after, she happened to be sweeping the floor and she went after him with that broom and she nailed him three or four times before he made it outta the kitchen. And I mean, she was quick and she, she nailed him. She would've put Zorro to shame. And then there was another time where he took off out the back door and she, she was cooking. I don't know what he did. She. [chuckles] She had a habit of taking off her shoes and throwing them at you. She hit, she hit him with her shoe. She was good at it. And then I made a mistake one time

when I was, when I was young, and I never made it after that. I, for some reason, I don't know, I was, I'm gonna say I was between 10 and 12 and I. I cussed at her and she tried dealing with me, but I was too fast for her. And I remember, I left and she kept telling me to come back and, you know, so she could go ahead and punish me. And I said, "*Nope, I ain't coming back. 'cause I know what's gonna happen."* And then my dad got home and I'd forgotten about it. She called, she says, "*Time to eat*." And I walked in the door, my dad grabbed me, he had his belt off and I got, he only spanked me once. [breathes] And I never did it again. [chokes up]

[01:48:51] **Richard:** But like I said, my mom, you know did, did the spanking and everything on the spot. There wasn't, any "*Just wait until your dad got home*" and everybody loved my dad and he used to. The kids, my cousins and stuff, loved him. Thought he was, because he was a big man. He's. He was. He's even bigger than I am. I mean, he was 6' 1" 6' 2", big man. So a lot of the kids were afraid of him and stuff. He had kind of a deep voice, I guess. I don't know. But anyway, he used to, to go ahead and stuff, and that was one thing when you went to somebody's house, one of the things you were required to do was to say, "*Hello, who's coming over to visit?*" And like I said, 'cause he was such a big man and stuff, they were, you know, kind of afraid of him. But, you know, he never, he never yelled at them, touched or anything like that you know. He's tried to speak as soft as he could to them, but, and, but one of the things, so he could have them calm down, was that he, he would, "*Hey*," to the boys, he says, he says, "*You're*", you know, "*You're becoming a man. You need to, you need to shake hands*." So he would go ahead and he'd hold out his hand. He had big hands, [chokes ups] so they would go shake his hand, and then what he'd do [laughs]. He'd stick out his foot and shake it at them and stuff. And he says, "*Come on, come on, come on.*" And so they would, they thought that was the funniest thing. And so then even the, the girls would get in line to say hello to him and shake, but that was one of the things that, you know, you were taught to do was to say hello at least.

[01:50:56] **Interviewer:** Mm-hmm.

[01:50:56] **Richard:** You know, the first time someone came in. But yeah.

[01:51:08] **Richard:** Um, now my dad took me places when he was, when he was working and one of the things when we would take my mom and we would go park up at Montgomery Wards and one of the things Montgomery Wards had at the time was. They had and which he loved, was, they had warm. I'm not sure how to explain this. Anyway, they were warm cashews. And he loved cashews. And they, you know, just like popcorn stuff. He'd get me a bag of popcorn and he'd get a bag of cashews and we would walk and we'd walk down to his, and we would go generally when he got paid. And my mom would go off and my mom and sister would go off and my dad and I would go off and we would walk down to this little cigar shop or smoke shop, I guess what you'd call 'em now. And he would go in there and he would buy like four cigars, which at the time, I mean, he, he smoked White L cigars with no filter which killed him. He died of lung cancer. But he would splurge and he would buy four cigars. And at that time, cigar, you know, it was, they were expensive. They were a dollar to 50 cents a piece. And that was expensive way back then. And so he, we'd walk down, he'd that go there, and every once in a while I would, I would be able to talk him into, can't think of the place. I think it was called Carnations. It was an ice cream parlor. And I would get him, you know, I would beg him, "*Can, can I get a milkshake?"* And he'd go, "*No*" and stuff. And I go and I found out,

figured out lately, the more I asked, the more he was gonna say no. So I would ask once, maybe twice, and we'd be walking around and then on occasion we'd end up in front of this ice cream partner. It was, and we'd go in, and this was back in the old days when they made a milkshake. They gave you the glass container and they gave you the metal container to go ahead and having two, you know, it's like having two milkshakes. And I would have get a strawberry shake. He, and he goes, "*Hurry up, we gotta meet your mom, your mom and sister, your mom*" and stuff, uh, to go ahead and do that. And the other thing.

[01:54:36] **Richard:** Excuse me. [chokes up]

[01:54:43] **Richard:** The other thing he would do. The other thing he would, they would do with, me was. [chokes up]

[01:55:04] **Richard:** He'd take me to the wrestling matches [chokes up] down to the Memorial Auditorium and I was still in grammar school and right here and talking to my mom earlier in the week that he was gonna go to them. And I'd asked my mom, ask my mom, I "*ask dad if I can go*," and she said, "*You ask him, you're the one that wants to go*." And I go, "*No, he'll say no to me*." And so, you know, I'd ask him. And then he would of course ask my mom. And it wasn't till later years that I figured out if she would want me to go. She would. How can I put this? When my dad would say, "*Ask my mom*", and my mom would say, "*Ask my dad*." And my dad would say, "*Ask my mom*." That was their way of saying "*No, he cannot go.*" And so, you know, since you (my mom said) "*Got all your*". (I said) "*Yeah, I did my homework as soon as I got home*." (My mom asked) "*Are you gonna get up in the morning when I tell you to get get ready for school*?" (I said) "*I'll get up. I'll get up.*" Because usually the wrestling matches were over between 10 and 11. By the time I got home, you know, it was like 11 o'clock, 12 o'clock. And I had to get up early to get dressed, get cleaned up, eat breakfast, and then make sure I was ready. I was ready to catch my ride and go to school. So, we'd go and I knew all the players. I mean, I knew them by heart and stuff. That was, and my sister. I think my dad took my sister once or twice and sh uh, I don't know it was, this was. I mean, it's not the pre, the big thing that they do now show on TV and stuff. I mean, it was a circus where circuit, where the wrestlers would go to different towns and stuff and everything else. And, uh, see, uh, there's a couple that I remember. There was two brothers that were Chinese or Japanese and they were the dirty fighters and they were Hi, Kenji, Shibuya and his brother. And then there was the good guy and one of 'em, I remember it was Mexican guy, Pepper Gomez. And you know, everybody when they got out onto the ring and stuff, they would go ahead and applaud and boo and everything else and you know, to go ahead and, and do that. And half the time when I was going to Willings it was only like maybe a 15-minute ride, 20- minute after you got through traffic and you know, from the Royal auditorium to the car to drive in. Half the time I was fell asleep, but I'd go to sleep and get, I'd get up. It was a struggle and stuff. And sometimes I was halfway falling asleep in class and stuff. But yeah, that was one of the things I did with my dad. So those are all good memories.

[01:58:44] **Interviewer:** Is there anything else that you would want to like add that maybe I missed or wanna expand on before we end the oral, the recording?

[01:58:59] **Richard:** No, I, I don't, can't recall anything else, at least at this, at this time and stuff. But. The only thing I could mention is that I.

[01:59:23] **Richard:** That I had a, [takes a breathe] I had a good life.

[01:59:36] **Richard:** I lost my dad. I turned 13 in January. February, my dad passed away. And I remember. [breathes in and continues] I remember at times my mom working two jobs. [chokes up] She could pay, so she could pay bills, put food on the table, put clothes on my back.

[02:00:06] **Richard:** So [whispers] no, I don't. Well, at least at this time, I don't have anything to add.

[02:00:37] **Interviewer:** That's okay. We can end the recording. Thank you. Thank you for sharing like your history and just like to, like also spending like your energy as well, like your time and energy for this oral history.